

23 October 1962

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NSC.
10:00 a.m., October 23, 1962

PRESENT: The President, Vice President, Secty. McNamara,
Secty. Gilpatric, Gen. Taylor, Mr. Bundy, Secty. Ball,
Secty. Johnson, Amb. Thompson, Attorney General, DCI

1. McCone gave a brief intelligence report as covered by the attached documents. (Descriptive note attached). Lundahl displayed the most recent photographs and a map showing 97 per cent coverage of the island.

2. Robert Kennedy stated that the question had been raised as to why the situation was not reported earlier, what was wrong with our intelligence. It was agreed that the rapidity with which the MRBM site construction took place, and other events took place, accounted for the suddenness of the findings and that the leadership and selected [redacted] should be contacted privately.

Action: DCI was requested to contact Fulbright, Russell, Vinson, Halleck, Dirksen, and Hickenlooper, and [redacted]

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3. McNamara raised questions of when blockade proclamation will be issued, become effective, and discussed plans for the intercept of the first ship which would be the Kimovsk. It was decided that if OAS acted on Tuesday, the proclamation would be issued, effective Wednesday morning, October 24. Probably the first intercept would be made on that day.

4. The President discussed the program, defending the steps taken, stated earlier action would not have been supported and would not have shut off the possibility of missiles, emphasized that mobile missiles can come in at any time and be set up rapidly.

5. McNamara discussed several military actions, including extension of tours of duty of Navy and Marine Corps personnel, and these were approved.

OSD REVIEW COMPLETED

6. McNamara then raised question of reaction to firing on a U-2, indicated pilots instructed to take evasive action. It was decided that we would be immediately informed through JCS to the Secretary of Defense and a prompt decision for retaliation would then be made by the President. Taylor reported eight attack aircraft are maintained in hot alert and can destroy SAM sites within two hours or approximately the time that the U-2 would get back if the attack on it failed. McNamara confirmed that air-sea rescue was continuing. It was decided that if the President was not available, McNamara would have authority to act.

Action: General Taylor agreed that he would take up and confirm today CIA request that our representatives be stationed with JCS planning staff and in the Flag Plot and in the JCS War Room. If there is any delay on this please inform me so that I can again communicate with Taylor.

7. McNamara noted that they had no air intercept capability and would not attempt at this time to develop their plan of air intercept.

Action: It was requested that CIA and Defense carefully analyze air traffic and report currently so that if there is a marked build-up, the Committee will be advised and appropriate action can be taken.

8. McNamara then presented the need for shipping, indicating between 125 and 130 Merchant ships were needed to support an invasion and that a few had been chartered as of yesterday. He felt perhaps 20 more could be secured promptly, but this would leave about 100 short, and this would involve extensive requisitioning. McCone pointed out the serious consequences to American business, inter-coastal and coast-wise shipping, the Northwest lumber industry, et cetera, et cetera. McCone suggested consideration be given to taking foreign flag ships on a bare boat basis. Defense was asked to explore the possibility of temporary waiver of laws regulating operation of foreign flag ships, et cetera, et cetera.

9. McCone and McNamara raised the question of low level flights.

Action: Six flights were approved and General Taylor ordered them off immediately. It was presumed that they will return not later than 1:00 o'clock today.

Action: It is very important that NPIC and DCI's office receive prints at earliest moment. DDCI to follow. Also important that if the photography is productive of new and more convincing information, prints should be sent to Governor Stevenson at once.

10. The President raised question of security of our own air fields in Florida during surprise strafing, etc. McNamara and Gilpatric assumed responsibility.

11. After a brief discussion of communications Bundy stated that subject under study by Dr. Wiesner, and urged State, Defense and CIA communications specialists to contact Wiesner.

Action: Following meeting McCone, Wiesner, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] met and reviewed the [REDACTED]
system. Subject left for further discussion today.

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Action: This whole [REDACTED] problem is to be
followed up energetically by CIA with Wiesner and all appropriate
actions taken.

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12. Secretary Ball reported Governor Stevenson and Mr. McCloy felt they did not have enough information to make a convincing case before the UN Security Council. They requested (1) a large map marked in color, showing the actual locations of a few of the sites, possibly one MRBM site, one IRBM site and one or two air fields; (2) pictures of the sites showing progressive construction with dates indicated; (3) indication, but not necessarily the numbers, of all of the sites; (4) a pre-May 1, 1960 U-2 picture of the Soviet MRBM/IRBM site to show similarity.

Action: The Committee left matter of disclosure to McCone, despatch of Lundahl and Cline to New York for discussions, and assistance in developing Stevenson's scenario. McCone authorized items one, two and three above but refused item 4. Also agreed transmit low-level product to Stevenson if same useful.

13. Bundy explained idea of creating a staff to support the Committee indicating each member should have a working staff member, details to be worked out later.

Action: DDCI should consider appropriate assignment after conferring with State and Defense and determining their nominees. This will be more or less full time and this staff man can handle Agency representation and also support me.